

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

R.T., an Individual,
Plaintiff,
v.
BW RRI III LLC d/b/a “RED ROOF INN”,
Defendant.

Case No:

COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES

JURY DEMAND

COMPLAINT AND DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

COMES NOW the Plaintiff R.T., by and through the undersigned counsel, and respectfully submits her complaint for damages and makes the following averments.

INTRODUCTION

1. This action for damages is brought by R.T (“Plaintiff”), a survivor of sex trafficking, under the Federal William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (hereinafter “TVPRA”), 18 U.S.C. § 1595, as well as per any state laws as may be identified herein.

Complaint for Damages - 1

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1. 2. BW RRI III LLC, d/b/a Red Roof Inn (“Defendant”) was a hotel owner, hotel operator,
2. franchisee, manager, and/or supervisor of the subject premises and subject hotel located at 16838
3. International Blvd, Seattle, WA 98188 during the relevant time period, and prior thereto, and as
4. such, responsible for the subject hotel doing business as the Red Roof Inn during the time period
5. Plaintiff was sex trafficked on said premises.
6.

7. 3. During the relevant time period Defendant was owner of the subject premises located at
8. 16838 International Blvd, Seattle, WA 98188.
9.

10. 4. Sex trafficking is defined under 22 U.S.C. § 7102 (11) as “The recruitment, harboring,
11. transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the purposes of a
12. commercial sex act, in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or
13. in which the person induced to perform such an act has not attained 18 years of age.”
14.

15. 5. Plaintiff meets the definition of a sex trafficking victim as she was induced by force,
16. fraud, and coercion by her trafficker(s) to engage in commercial sex at the subject hotel. She was
17. psychologically and/or physically prohibited from escaping from her trafficker(s).
18.

19. 6. Plaintiff is a victim as set forth in the TVPRA as she was induced to engage in
20. commercial sex by her trafficker(s) by force, fraud, and coercion at the subject hotel.
21.

22. 7. The TVPRA provides a civil remedy for victims of a violation of the act. Specifically,
23. section 1595 of the TVPRA provides that “[a]n individual who is a victim of a violation of this
24. chapter may bring a civil action against the perpetrator (or whoever knowingly benefits,
25. financially or by receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture which that person
26. Complaint for Damages - 2

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1 knew or should have known has engaged in an act in violation of this chapter) in an appropriate
2 district court of the United States and may recover damages and reasonable attorney's fees." 18
3 U.S.C § 1595.

4 8. As it pertains to the subject hotel, Plaintiff was sex trafficked at the aforesaid hotel by
5 her trafficker(s) in 2015 and 2016.

6 9. Sex trafficking had occurred at this subject hotel dating back to at least 2015 and, upon
7 information and belief, prior thereto.

8 10. As a hotel operator, Defendant controlled the training, policies, and decisions on
9 implementation and execution of anti-trafficking policies, protocol, rules and guidelines for its
10 subject property where Plaintiff was trafficked.

11 11. Sex trafficking is prevalent at hotels and motels throughout the United States and
12 globally due to many factors, including but not limited to, ease of access for buyers, the ability to
13 pay in cash (non-traceability), the ability to maintain some level of anonymity, privacy and
14 discretion.

15 12. At all material times, upon information and belief, Defendant had knowledge of the
16 prevalence of sexual trafficking within the hotel industry, yet Defendant failed to prevent and/or
17 take steps to prevent this trafficking from occurring at the subject hotel so that Defendant could
18 continue earning a profit.

19 13. As part of their knowledge of sex trafficking, Defendant knew or should have known that
20 sex trafficker(s), or 'pimps,' use drugs, threats, violence, manipulation, lies, debt bondage, and
21 other forms of coercion to compel adults and children to engage in commercial sex acts against

1 their will on hotel premises.

2 14. Plaintiff's sex trafficker(s) deliberately selected Defendant's hotel as a venue to conduct
3 their sex trafficking activities.

4 15. The passage of the TVPRA in 2008, as well as numerous other legislative initiatives, put
5 the Defendant on notice of the high likelihood of these illegal acts occurring on the subject hotel
6 premises which, at a minimum, warranted them to be all the more vigilant and proactive in
7 preventing this conduct.

8 16. Defendant participated in a venture by operating a hotel that rented rooms to individuals
9 that Defendant knew or should have known were involved in sex-trafficking pertaining to
10 Plaintiff.

11 17. The rental of a hotel room constitutes a financial benefit from a relationship with the
12 trafficker sufficient to meet the "financially benefitted" element of the §1595(a) standard.

13 18. Defendant, as the owner, operator, manager, controller, and/or franchisee of the subject
14 hotel, knew or should have known, based on a combination of well-documented indicators, that
15 sex trafficking and other criminal activity was occurring, and would continue to occur, at the
16 subject hotel as a result of their misfeasance and nonfeasance.

17 19. A hotel can deny accommodation and/or eject a guest for a number of reasons
18 including, but not limited to, (1) guest visibly under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol; (2)
19 guest creating a nuisance to the public; (3) guest believed to use a hotel room for unlawful
20 purposes; (4) guest uses hotel amenities and premises for unlawful acts; (5) guest brings in extra
21 unregistered guests; (6) guest behavior reasonably disturbs other guests; (7) guest violates other
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1 rules set by the hotel; and (8) for other indicated reasons.

2 20. Upon information and belief, years before Plaintiff was trafficked, Defendant knew or
3 should have known of the critical role that the hotel industry plays in enabling the sex trade
4 industry and of the widespread national epidemic of hotel/motel sex trafficking.

5 21. Training of front-line hotel employees to be alert to red flags of trafficking activity is
6 imperative and a best practice of hotel operating companies. Sex traffickers utilizing hotels within
7 which to operate their illegal enterprises was well known within the industry by 2011. By 2012,
8 training guides and videos were available through the American Hotel Lodging Association
9 (AHLA) and ECPAT-USA and via other resources.

10 22. At all material times, Defendant, individually and/or by their respective actual or apparent
11 agents, operators, servants, and/or employees, aided, concealed, confined, benefitted and profited
12 from sex trafficking and other criminal activity that was occurring at the subject hotel, including
13 as to Plaintiff.

14 23. At all material times, Defendant, individually and/or by their actual or apparent agents,
15 operators, servants, and/or employees, harbored sex trafficker(s) at the subject hotel and/or failed
16 to rectify the foreseeable risks of sex trafficking and other criminal activity that were occurring
17 and would continue to occur at the subject hotel.

18 24. At all material times, Defendant, individually and/or by their respective actual or apparent
19 agents, operators, servants, and/or employees, failed to take steps to prevent dangerous conditions
20 from existing at the subject hotel, failed to ensure the subject hotel was safe and secure from
21 criminal conduct and failed to report suspicious conduct, such as sex trafficking, at the subject

1 hotel.

2 25. As a result of Defendant's failure to act and Defendant's negligent operations as outlined
3 in the Complaint, Defendant allowed the subject hotel to be a premises for the carrying out of sex
4 trafficking of this particular Plaintiff.

5 26. While Defendant profited from the room occupancy at the subject hotel, which included
6 rental fees, increased property value, food and beverage sales on site and/or ATM fees, Plaintiff
7 was exposed to continuous and repeated dangerous conditions at the subject hotel as a sex trafficked
8 victim that resulted in her confinement, bodily injuries, sexual exploitation, emotional distress,
9 mental harm and anguish, and conscious pain and suffering on the subject premises.

10 27. Before and during this period in 2015 and 2016, Defendant was on notice of the
11 prevalence of sex trafficking at the subject hotel as well as at similarly situated hotels within the
12 subject location and its general vicinity, and Defendant failed to take adequate steps that would
13 have prevented its occurrence.

14 28. Before and during the relevant time period of 2015 and 2016, Defendant failed to
15 implement sufficient educational and training programs on sex trafficking within their business
16 chain of command, as well as failed to implement policies for preventing, identifying, reporting,
17 documenting, investigating, and stopping sex trafficking at the subject hotel.

18 29. During the relevant time period of 2015 and 2016, Defendant knew or should have known
19 that Plaintiff was being trafficked at the subject hotel and Defendant failed to act upon the obvious
20 and overt signs alerting them to the crimes taking place at this subject hotel.

21 30. Plaintiff brings this action for damages against Defendant. Defendant, in violation of the

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1 TVPRA, knowingly benefited from a venture that they knew, or should have known, to be
2 engaging in sex trafficking in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1591(a) and (b), and who enabled, harbored,
3 facilitated or financially benefited, or any combination of the foregoing, from a sex trafficking
4 venture in which Plaintiff was trafficked for sex, sexually exploited, and victimized in violation
5 of the TVPRA.

6 31. Had the Defendant timely and properly implemented policies and procedures common
7 and reasonably accepted in the hospitality industry concerning anti-trafficking, safety, and
8 security it is more likely than not that the injuries suffered by the Plaintiff at the subject hotel
9 would have been prevented or mitigated.

10 32. Defendant knowingly benefitted financially by receiving things of value by means of
11 operating a hotel and renting rooms to trafficker(s) (or members of their entourage) and said
12 Defendant knew or should have known said traffickers were engaged in an act in violation of the
13 subject TVPRA chapter pertaining to Plaintiff.

14 33. Defendant knew or should have known of the ongoing criminal enterprises of sex that
15 had been conspicuously operating in the subject hotel.

16 34. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's willful blindness, negligence, facilitation,
17 misfeasance, nonfeasance and/or consistent refusals to prevent sex trafficking at the subject hotel,
18 the Plaintiff was drugged, malnourished, beaten, sex trafficked, sexually exploited, physically
19 abused, mentally abused, and victimized repeatedly at this subject hotel.

20 35. Plaintiff is a victim as set forth in the TVPRA, as during the relevant time period herein,
21 she was induced to engage in commercial sex by her trafficker(s) by fraud, force, and coercion at

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1 the subject hotel.

2 36. Due to the failure of Defendant to timely and properly embrace and implement anti-
3 trafficking policies and practices, Plaintiff was repeatedly abused, victimized, and trafficked for
4 sex. Defendant ignored open and obvious indications of sex trafficking that enabled Plaintiff's
5 trafficker(s) to use the subject hotel to traffic Plaintiff and likely other victims without
6 repercussion.

7 **JURISDICTION AND VENUE**

8 37. This Honorable Court has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331
9 because this action arises under the Constitution, laws, or treaties of the United States, namely
10 the TVPRA 18 U.S.C. § 1595, and this Court has supplemental jurisdiction over Plaintiff's claims
11 that do not arise under federal law because each claim is, "so related to claims in the action within
12 [this Court's] original jurisdiction that they form part of the same controversy under Article III of
13 the United States Constitution." 28 U.S.C. § 1337(a).

14 38. Venue is proper in this district pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391 because a substantial part of
15 the events or omissions giving rise to the claims asserted in this action occurred in the judicial
16 district where this action was brought, and Defendant conducts business within this district
17 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b).

18 **PARTIES**

19 39. Due to the sensitive, private, and potentially retaliatory nature of the allegations herein,
20 Plaintiff's name and address are not contained in this Complaint to protect the safety, privacy,
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1 and identity of this subject sex trafficked victim. Nationwide similarly situated Plaintiffs have
2 proceeded by pseudonym or by their initials due to the forgoing.

3 40. At all relevant and material times to the sex trafficking alleged herein, Plaintiff was
4 residing in the State of Washington.

5 41. Plaintiff is currently a resident of the State of Georgia.

6 42. Plaintiff was born in October 1982.

7 43. Plaintiff is a “victim” of sex trafficking as protected under applicable provisions of the
8 TVPRA.

9 44. As it pertains to this Defendant, Plaintiff was sex trafficked at the “subject hotel” located
10 at 16838 International Blvd, Seattle, WA 98188 in 2015 and 2016.

11 45. At all times relevant and material, Defendant BW RRI III LLC was doing business as Red
12 Roof Inn located at 16838 International Blvd, Seattle, WA 98188, and, upon information and
13 belief, were authorized to do, licensed to do, and were doing business in the State of Washington
14 offering the subject hotel as a place of public lodging.

15 46. At all times relevant and material to this complaint, Defendant was, by and through their
16 agents, servants, staff and/or employees, the owner, operators, managers, supervisors, controllers
17 and innkeepers of the hotel, doing business as, the Red Roof Inn located at 16838 International
18 Blvd, Seattle, WA 98188.

19 **SEX TRAFFICKING UNDER FEDERAL LAW**

20 47. The requirements for liability under the TVPRA, 18 U.S.C. § 1595 on a beneficiary theory
21 can be stated as follows: (1) the person or entity must “knowingly benefit, financially or by
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1 receiving anything of value,” (2) from participating in a venture, (3) that the “person knew or
2 should have known has engaged in an act in violation of this chapter.” 18 U.S.C. § 1595(a).

3 48. Sex trafficking is defined by the TVPRA under 22 U.S.C. § 7102, as “the recruitment,
4 harboring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or soliciting of a person for the
5 purposes of a commercial sex act and in which the commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud,
6 or coercion or in which the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age.”

7 49. Sex trafficking ventures are prohibited by federal criminal law under the already existing
8 crimes 18 U.S.C. § 1589 and §1590.

9 50. Thus, while the complete definition of ‘sex trafficking’ is found in the TVPRA under
10 22 U.S.C. § 7102, and it is specifically prohibited under 18 U.S.C. §1591, it is nevertheless a
11 long-recognized and familiar atrocity.

12 51. Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §1591(a) and (b), all who knowingly provide or obtain commercial
13 sex that was provided or obtained through force, fraud, and coercion, or from a person under the
14 age of 18 years old, are guilty of sex trafficking. This includes, at a minimum, both the ‘traffickers’
15 who recruit, harbor, transport, and provide individuals for forced commercial sex work and the
16 ‘Johns’ or ‘buyers’ who obtain, solicit, or patronize forced commercial sex work.

17 52. Due to the failure of the hospitality industry to address the issue, hotels are the venue of
18 choice for sex trafficking.

19 **DEFENDANT’S DUTY OF CARE TO PATRONS**

20 53. In the State of Washington, hotels are “innkeepers” and owe patrons a special duty of
21 care.

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1 54. The subject hotel is a public lodging establishment.

2 55. Defendant operated, managed, supervised, controlled, leased and/or is otherwise
3 responsible for the subject hotel for the purpose of making a profit for the relevant time period in
4 question. The premises of the subject hotel includes a common space and private rooms as well
5 as a parking lot that abuts to a sidewalk and/or land, and, at all material times, Defendant had
6 possession, custody, or control of these common spaces, private rooms, parking lots and any
7 sidewalk and/or land abutting thereto as it applies to their business of providing public lodging at
8 the subject hotel.

9 56. Aside from their special duty to patrons and guests at the subject hotel, such as Plaintiff at
10 all material times, Defendant had one of the highest obligations to protect their guests from known
11 or anticipated dangers, which includes sex trafficking and illegal enterprises.

12 57. At all relevant times, Defendant was aware of and/or should have been aware of their
13 roles and responsibility in sex trafficking.

14 **A. DEFENDANT'S KNOWLEDGE OF THE PREVALENCE OF SEX TRAFFICKING
15 AT THE SUBJECT HOTEL AND THEIR PARTICIPATION.**

16 58. At all relevant and material times, Defendant, as owner, operators, managers, supervisors,
17 controllers and/or entity otherwise responsible for the subject hotel, knew or should have known
18 that their hotel offered a level of anonymity and a level of non-traceability, making them ideal
19 venues for crime, drugs and sex trafficking in particular.

20 59. At all relevant and material times, Defendant, as owner, operators, managers, supervisors,
21 controllers and/or entity otherwise responsible for the subject hotel knew or should have known
22

1 that hotels are the top-reported venue where sex trafficking acts occur and that traffickers were
2 using the subject hotel as a hub for their sexual trafficking operations.

3 60. At all relevant and material times, Defendant, as owner, operators, managers, supervisors,
4 controllers and/or entity otherwise responsible for the subject hotel knew or should have known
5 that trafficker(s) were harboring victims, including Plaintiff, at the subject hotel, and were forcing
6 them to engage in sex services, wherein buyers (“Johns”) would come to the hotel to purchase
7 sex.

8 61. At all relevant and material times, Defendant, individually and/or by and through their
9 actual or apparent agents, servants, franchisees and/or employees, witnessed manifestations of
10 sex trafficking and commercial exploitation taking place at the subject hotel through various
11 indicators that trafficker(s) and their victims exhibit during their stay at the subject hotel.

12 62. At all relevant and material times, Defendant was on notice of repeated incidences of sex
13 trafficking occurring on the subject hotel premises yet they failed to take the necessary actions to
14 prevent sex trafficking from taking place and in particular, the sex trafficking of Plaintiff.

15 63. At all relevant and material times, Defendant knew or should have known that “pimps,”
16 “Johns,” and/or sex trafficker(s) used the subject hotel to facilitate the trafficking of women for
17 sex, including but not limited to Plaintiff.

18 64. Defendant had the knowledge, ability, and the greatest reach to prevent, identify and
19 thwart sexual exploitation, including that of Plaintiff, at this subject hotel.

20 65. Multiple statutes and initiatives starting in 1997, have informed, mandated, called for, and
21 suggested hotel operators, managers, supervisors, controllers and/or staff, including Defendant,

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1 to implement effective safeguards to mitigate the risk that sex trafficking will occur at or involve
2 their premises and personnel, including the subject hotel.

3 66. Prior to the trafficking of Plaintiff, voluminous data, step-by-step solutions and well-
4 researched manuals published by anti-trafficking groups were available to Defendant,
5 individually and/or through their actual or apparent agents, servants, employees and/or staff in
6 every position, to help them identify the signs of sex trafficking and stop it.

7 67. At all relevant and material times, Defendants had a legally imposed duty to ensure that
8 their hotel had taken all appropriate measures to prevent sex trafficking, and/or to timely
9 implement reasonable policies, training, education and security measures to prevent sex
10 trafficking.

11 68. At all material times, the agents and/or employees of Defendant were uniquely situated to
12 identify and report suspicious activity on their hotel properties because from check-in to check-out
13 there were numerous indicators of the subject sex trafficking that was occurring of this Plaintiff
14 at the subject hotel.

15 69. Defendant's agents and/or employees, however, failed to take steps to report the
16 suspicious and obvious trafficking indicators at the subject hotel.

17 70. Had Defendant properly trained their staff, agents and/or employees and/or implemented
18 an anti-sex trafficking protocol at this subject hotel and/or provided other reasonable security
19 measures, they would have prevented the trafficking of persons at this subject hotel and in
20 particular this Plaintiff.

21 71. Signs of sex trafficking at a hotel, and signs which were occurring at Defendant's hotel

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1 include, but are not limited to, those “red flags” identified in Count 1 below.

2 72. Defendant, individually and by and through their actual or apparent agents, servants,
3 employees and/or staff, were aware of and/or should have been aware of a number of warning
4 signs at their hotel that indicated the presence of sex trafficking, including but not limited to:

- 5 a. Persons showing signs of malnourishment, poor hygiene, fatigue, sleep
6 deprivation, untreated illness, injuries, and/or unusual behavior;
- 7 b. Persons lacking freedom of movement or being constantly monitored;
- 8 c. Persons in risqué clothing;
- 9 d. Victim(s) dressed in a sexually explicit manner;
- 10 e. Persons requesting room or housekeeping services (additional towels, new linens,
11 etc.), but routinely denying hotel staff entry into the room;
- 12 f. Hotel guests with few or no personal possessions during check in and within the
13 room;
- 14 g. Sex paraphernalia in rooms (condoms, lubricant, lotion);
- 15 h. Large amounts of, e.g., used condoms, empty lube bottles, lingerie, sex toys,
16 bodily fluids on the sheets and towels, and other sex-related items in the hotel
17 rooms;
- 18 i. Payments for the rooms in cash, or cash substitutes, such as a prepaid credit card;
- 19 j. Victim(s)’ and/or Plaintiff’s physical appearance (malnourished, bruised, beaten,
20 drugged, and inappropriate attire);
- 21 k. A continuous procession of men (sex buyers and/or “Johns”) entering and leaving

1 Plaintiff's room and/or victim's rooms;

2 1. Excessive requests for sheets, cleaning supplies, towels, and room service;

3 m. Red flags identified in Count 1 below; and

4 n. Other red flags that Defendant knew and/or should have known of.

5 73. Defendant could have and should have adopted policies and procedures related to sex
6 trafficking and made anti-sex trafficking resources readily available to their actual or apparent
7 agents, servants, employees and/or staff, but, upon information and belief, they did not.

8 74. Defendant could have and should have mandated that all of their actual or apparent
9 agents, servants, franchisees, employees and/or staff complete anti-sex trafficking training, but,
10 upon information and belief, they did not properly do so.

11 75. Defendant could have and should have encouraged all of their actual or apparent agents,
12 servants, staff, employees and/or staff to report suspected incidents of sex trafficking when
13 observed at the subject hotel, but, upon information and belief, they did not.

14 76. Defendant could have and should have developed and maintained relationships with law
15 enforcement regarding appropriate and timely responses to suspected incidents of sex trafficking
16 at the subject hotel, but, upon information and belief, they did not.

17 77. Defendant could have and should have posted anti-sex trafficking awareness and
18 informational materials in common areas and guest rooms at the subject hotel, to help eliminate
19 sex trafficking, but, upon information and belief, they did not properly do so.

20 78. Defendant failed to take effective preventative measure at the subject hotel, in spite of
21 the indicia of sex trafficking and effective preventative measures being widely known and
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1 available to them; they simply elected not to properly engage in preventative policies and
2 practices.

3 79. The motivation behind Defendant's ongoing willful blindness and ongoing failure to act
4 was, in whole or in part, for Defendant's financial benefit.

5 80. By repeatedly failing to heed the call or repeatedly failing to execute their own policies,
6 Defendant facilitated the sexual trafficking crimes at the subject hotel and in particular the
7 victimization of this Plaintiff.

8 9 81. Due to Defendant's actions, failures to act, and/or omissions, Defendant facilitated and
10 enabled sex trafficker(s) to use the subject hotel for sex trafficking of women and this particular
11 Plaintiff.

12 13 82. Defendant's failure to prevent and stop sex trafficking and sexual exploitation at the
14 subject hotel, makes them accountable to victims of sex trafficking, including the Plaintiff.

15 **B. THE SEX TRAFFICKING OF PLAINTIFF AT THE SUBJECT HOTEL, I.E. RED
16 ROOF INN**

17 83. Pertaining to this Defendant, in 2015 and 2016, Plaintiff was sex trafficked at the
18 subject hotel by her trafficker(s).

19 20 84. At all times relevant and material to this Complaint, Defendant, individually and/or
21 by and through their actual or apparent agents, servants, and/or employees, rented rooms at the
22 subject hotel to Plaintiff's sex trafficker(s) and Defendant financially benefitted from the
23 same.

24 85. At all times material to this Complaint, Defendant received monetary payment for

1 the rental of rooms at the subject hotel, including the room(s) where Plaintiff was being
2 trafficked.

3 86. The Plaintiff was forced to engage in sexual activities within and on the premises of
4 the subject hotel, including within the rooms rented to and/or by Plaintiff's trafficker(s), that
5 was at all relevant times owned, operated, managed, supervised, and/or controlled by
6 Defendant.

7 87. As it pertains to this Defendant, Plaintiff was forced to perform numerous
8 commercial sex acts per day while at the subject hotel. Force means any form of violence,
9 compulsion or restraint exercised upon or against a person. Force can also be affected through
10 power or pressure, which need not necessitate physical components.

11 88. Upon information and belief, while at the subject hotel, Plaintiff was forced to engage
12 in frequent use of drugs and/or alcohol and would exhibit behavior consistent with someone
13 who was under the influence, or near overdose, of the same.

14 89. Defendant, individually and/or by their actual or apparent agents, servants, staff
15 and/or employees, knew or had constructive knowledge, that they were renting or otherwise
16 providing rooms and services to individuals, such as Plaintiff's sex trafficker(s), who were
17 engaged in the commercial sex trade.

18 90. Defendant, individually and/or by their actual or apparent agents, servants, and/or
19 employees, knew or should have known of suspicious activity occurring at the subject hotel
20 and that by failing to inspect and make their hotel premises safe from criminal activity, it was
21 foreseeable that illegal activity was, and would continue to be, carried out on their hotel

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1 premises.

2 91. It follows then that Defendant could reasonably foresee that sex crimes, human
3 trafficking or other foreseeable acts were occurring on their premises and/or were being
4 committed against hotel guests, such as Plaintiff.

5 92. Moreover, Defendant's agents, servants, staff and employees observed Plaintiff and
6 had knowledge, or should have had knowledge, that Plaintiff was staying at the hotel for an
7 extended period of time to carry out sex trafficking.

8 93. At all relevant and material times, Defendant, individually and/or by and through their
9 actual or apparent agents, servants, staff and/or employees, was uniquely positioned to observe
10 the manifestations or indications of sex trafficking within the subject hotel.

11 94. Had the subject hotel staff been properly trained by Defendant and/or anyone acting on
12 their behalf regarding the obvious and overt signs of sex trafficking, they would have observed
13 the obvious and overt signs of sex trafficking at the subject hotel, including as they applied to
14 Plaintiff, and these signs would have been recognized and, therefore, reported.

15 95. Defendant exercised or had the right to exercise control over business operations,
16 management, supervision, administration, and procedures of the subject hotel.

17 96. Defendant failed to implement and enforce their own policy or policies and protect
18 Plaintiff from being sex trafficked.

19 97. Defendants knew or should have known that the subject hotel where Plaintiff was
20 trafficked was an area known for incidences of crime and prone to sex trafficking activity on and
21 around the subject hotel premises, including when Plaintiff was trafficked.

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1 98. Despite having evidence of sex trafficking that occurred at the subject hotel, Defendant
2 failed to stop these actions.

3 99. Defendants could have prevented sex trafficking, including but not limited to, by: (i)
4 distributing information to assist their agents, employees, and staff in identifying sex trafficking
5 and indications of an illegal enterprise or suspicious activity; (ii) posting notices on what is sex
6 trafficking and a national hotline; (iii) providing a process for reporting and escalating sex
7 trafficking concerns within the organization and to appropriate outside agencies; (iv) requiring all
8 employees to attend training related to handling a situation involving sex trafficking; (v)
9 providing new hire orientation on anti-sex trafficking measures, corporate responsibility and
10 whistleblowing of enablers; (vi) providing training and education to their staff through webinars,
11 seminars, conferences, and online portals on how to respond to suspected sex traffickers, victims
12 and suspicious activity; (vii) developing and holding ongoing training sessions on sex trafficking;
13 or providing checklists, escalation protocols and information to property management staff; or
14 tracking performance indicators and key metrics on human trafficking prevention; (viii) providing
15 steps hotel staff can take to deter traffickers and decline forms of bribery; and (ix) ensuring strict
16 security protocols, requiring credit cards only, and enforcing no loitering.

17 100. Defendants failed to take adequate steps to prevent sex trafficking at the subject hotel
18 where Plaintiff was trafficked.

19 101. The acts and/or omissions of Defendant served to support, facilitate, harbor, and
20 otherwise further the traffickers' sale and victimization of Plaintiff and others for commercial
21 sexual exploitation by repeatedly renting rooms to people they knew or should have known were
22

1 engaged in sex trafficking and in particular this Plaintiff.

2

3 **C. DEFENDANT KNOWINGLY BENEFITTED FROM PLAINTIFF'S SEX**

4 **TRAFFICKING**

5 102. At all relevant and material times, Defendant received money and financially profited
6 from the forced commercial sex acts being performed by Plaintiff that were being carried out
7 on the premises of the subject hotel.

8 103. Defendant knew or should have known that they were financially profiting from the
9 continuation of illegal commercial sex acts committed on the premises of the subject hotel
10 through both renting of rooms and provision of the Plaintiff's forced commercial sex services.

11 104. Despite knowledge, constructive knowledge and/or general awareness of the signs of
12 sex trafficking, Defendant, individually and/or by and through their actual or apparent agents,
13 servants, staff, and/or employees, failed to report to authorities, intervene, disrupt, refuse or
14 otherwise stop the sex trafficking of Plaintiff.

15 105. By harboring Plaintiff's sex trafficker(s) and their sex trafficked victims at the subject
16 hotel, Defendant, individually and/or by and through their actual or apparent agents, servants,
17 staff, and/or employees, continued to financially profit from the room occupancy derived from not
18 reporting and not refusing the sex trafficking of Plaintiff.

19 106. Accordingly, Defendant continued to financially profit from the room occupancy derived
20 from not protecting their hotel guests, to wit Plaintiff, from being a continuous victim of sex
21 trafficking.

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26 Complaint for Damages - 20

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**D. DEFENDANT'S WILLFUL BLINDNESS TO SEX TRAFFICKING AT THEIR
HOTEL**

107. Plaintiff was a hotel guest at the subject hotel and Plaintiff was seriously and permanently injured as a direct result of the Defendant's acts and omissions, in that Defendant permitted, harbored and facilitated illegal sex trafficking to take place at the subject hotel whereby the Plaintiff was coerced and forced to engage in sex, beaten, manipulated with drugs and enslaved.

108. More specifically, at all material times, in the quest for profits, the acts and/or omissions of Defendant caused Plaintiff to suffer physical, mental and emotional injuries, and conscious pain and suffering.

109. The injuries and/or harms that Plaintiff suffered as a result of Defendant's negligent operation of the subject hotel and Defendant's failure to make the hotel premises safe, are of a permanent and/or continuing nature.

110. Defendant, as hotel operators, owners, franchisees, supervisors and controllers, had a continuing legal duty to protect their hotel guests and other invitees, like Plaintiff, to use ordinary care to keep their hotel premises in a reasonably safe condition, and to protect their guests, such as Plaintiff, from harm due to reasonably foreseeable risks of injury, regardless if the guests were utilizing the hotel's common rooms, facilities, exterior passageways, or were within the confines of the rented rooms.

111. Defendant failed in their duties to Plaintiff to provide security and other precautions to prevent the criminal acts upon her by third parties on a regular basis.

112. Defendant should have taken steps to prevent sex trafficking at the subject hotel in

accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws and guidelines.

113. Accordingly, because sex trafficking and other illegal activity associated therewith was foreseeable, Defendant had a duty to take adequate security or remedial measures to protect their guests from criminal activity, to wit, Plaintiff.

114. By failing to act, Defendant, by and through their actual or apparent agents, servants, franchisees and/or employees, allowed Plaintiff to be harbored and confined for sexual acts while collecting rental fees thereon.

115. As a further direct and proximate result of Defendant's conduct and lack of due and reasonable care, Plaintiff has incurred expenses, fees, and costs of medical care and attention to her injuries, including: (1) physicians' fees; (2) medications and medical supplies; (3) hospitalizations; and (4) transportation costs to and from various physicians' offices and hospitals.

116. As a further direct and proximate result of Defendant's conduct and lack of due and reasonable care, the Plaintiff has suffered great physical and mental pain, and will continue to suffer such pain for the indefinite future, for which Plaintiff should also be compensated by Defendant.

CAUSE OF ACTION

COUNT I - VIOLATION OF 18 U.S.C. § 1595 (“TVPRA”)

117. Plaintiff sets forth an action for violation of 18 U.S.C § 1595 as against the above captioned Defendant.

118. In support of her action against Defendant, Plaintiff adopts and incorporates by reference

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1 all paragraphs contained in this Complaint as if fully set forth herein.

2 119. Plaintiff is a “victim” of sex trafficking as protected under applicable provisions of the
3 TVPRA.

4 120. As it pertains to this Defendant, Plaintiff was sex trafficked at the subject Red Roof Inn
5 located at 16838 International Blvd, Seattle, WA 98188 in 2015 and 2016.

6 121. Section 1591 of the TVPRA criminalizes sex trafficking of adults by force, fraud or
7 coercion. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 1591. Separately, §1595 of the TVPRA provides individuals who are
8 victims of sex trafficking with a civil remedy against the traffickers and/or the beneficiaries of the
9 sex trafficking ventures. *See* 18 U.S.C. §1595(a). More specifically, §1595 provides for three
10 distinct causes of action: (1) a claim against the trafficker who directly violated §1591(a)(1) – a
11 criminal statute; (2) a beneficiary claim against the trafficker who directly violated §1591(a)(2) –
12 a criminal statute; and (3) a beneficiary claim against a civil Defendant who did not violate §1591,
13 but who “knowingly benefit[ed], financially or by receiving anything of value from participation
14 in a venture which that person knew or should have known has engaged in an act in violation of
15 this chapter.” 18 U.S.C. § 1595(a).

16 122. In this matter, Plaintiff was a victim of sex trafficking on the premises of the subject
17 hotel.

18 123. Defendant rented room(s) to individual(s) it knew or should have known were engaged
19 in sex trafficking of women and Plaintiff in particular.

20 124. Defendant knowingly benefited financially or by receiving anything of value from
21 participation in a venture which said Defendant knew or should have known has engaged in an

1 act in violation of this chapter.

2 125. As to Plaintiff's TVPRA action as against the above captioned Defendant, Plaintiff is a
3 victim of sex trafficking within the meaning of 18 U.S.C. § 1591 and is therefore entitled to bring
4 a civil action under 18 U.S.C. § 1595 against any individual or entity who knowingly benefits,
5 financially or by receiving anything of value, from participation in a venture which that entity or
6 person knew or should have known has engaged in violations of the TVPRA.

7 126. Defendant participated in a venture by operating the subject hotel that rented rooms to
8 individuals that Defendant knew or should have known were involved in sex-trafficking
9 pertaining to Plaintiff.

10 127. The rental of a hotel room constitutes a financial benefit from a relationship with the
11 trafficker sufficient to meet the "financially benefitted" element of the §1595(a) standard.

12 128. Defendant knowingly benefited from the sex trafficking of Plaintiff at the subject hotel
13 by receiving payment for the room(s) rented for Plaintiff and her trafficker(s) at the subject hotel.
14 In addition, Defendant received other financial benefits, including but not limited to, food and
15 beverage sales and ATM fees from those persons who were engaging in sex trafficking.

16 129. Defendant knew or should have known about the nature of the sex trafficking occurring
17 at the subject hotel, including as they related to Plaintiff, due to the many red flags then and there
18 existing, including but not limited to:

19 a. Constant foot traffic of "Johns" to the trafficker's room to have sex with trafficked
20 women.

21 b. Parade of unregistered and suspicious individuals in and out of the subject room(s)

1 where trafficking was occurring.

2 c. Suspicious people coming in and out of the rented room(s).

3 d. Trafficked victim(s) would walk around hotel grounds drug and/or alcohol

4 impaired, sleep impaired, hygiene impaired, behavior impaired, with bruises, and

5 malnourished and in sexually explicit clothing.

6 e. The trafficked drug impaired women on the hotel premises.

7 f. The trafficked alcohol impaired women on the hotel premises.

8 g. The trafficked behavior impaired women on the hotel premises.

9 h. The trafficked speech impaired women on the hotel premises.

10 i. The trafficked hygiene impaired women on the hotel premises.

11 j. The trafficked women with visible bruises (from being hit by traffickers) on the

12 hotel premises.

13 k. The trafficker(s), trafficker's entourage, and trafficked women standing outside the

14 room when a "John" came to the room. (When the room was not occupied by a

15 paying "John," the room was full of suspicious people including the trafficker(s),

16 the traffickers' entourage, and the trafficked women. When a "John" would come

17 to the room, everyone but the "John" and the trafficked woman would leave the

18 room, so there would be a number of people, including drug impaired, behavior

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1 impaired, hygiene impaired, speech impaired, sleep deprived, and malnourished
2 people, and people with bruises, loitering outside the room.

3 1. Inside the hotel room, a suspicious bunch of people and suspicious items, including
4 weapons, cash, phones, drugs, drug paraphernalia, condoms, lubricants, lingerie,
5 and syringes.

6 7. m. Smoking cigarettes and drugs in room causing noticeable odor, which would
8 permeate outside room.

9 10. n. The activity of these suspicious looking people was not limited to inside the rented
11 room and directly outside the room but was also throughout the accessible common
12 areas and public areas of the subject hotel.

13 14. o. Trafficker(s) speaking to women in aggressive/abusive manner – which should
15 have raised alarms.

16 17. p. People staying at the hotel with no luggage/suitcases or few personal belongings.

18 19. q. Plaintiff's trafficker(s) was a pimp and his general conduct on hotel grounds was
20 not discreet. Plaintiff's trafficker(s) was frequently on drugs and exhibited violent
21 and aggressive behavior.

22 23. r. Trafficker(s) monitoring hotel hallway or door of room or walking hotel perimeter.

24 25. s. Other commonly known sex trafficking red flags which the above captioned
26 Defendant would have been aware of had anti-trafficking measures been timely and

1 properly implemented at the hotel.

2 130. Defendant was participating in a venture under 18 U.S.C. § 1595(a) by engaging in a
3 pattern of acts and omissions that were intended to support, facilitate, harbor, and otherwise
4 further the traffickers' sale and victimization of Plaintiff for commercial sexual exploitation by
5 repeatedly renting room(s) at subject hotel to people Defendant knew or should have known
6 were engaged in sex trafficking.

7 131. Defendant actively participated in this illegal endeavor by knowingly or negligently
8 providing lodging in which to harbor Plaintiff while she was being trafficked.

9 132. Plaintiff was forced to perform commercial sex acts in the room(s) at the subject hotel.
10 Accordingly, the traffic and parade of men coming in and out of her room was tremendous. This
11 procession of unregistered male guests would have been open and obvious to anyone working at
12 the subject hotel.

13 133. Plaintiff was sold via commercial sex transactions at the Defendant's subject hotel
14 property, where force, fraud, and/or coercion were used against her, while Defendant turned a
15 blind eye and continued to benefit.

16 134. Notably in a message from Plaintiff's trafficker to Plaintiff on December 16, 2016, the
17 trafficker wrote, in part:

18 “Bitch I’m on ur head and ima find u you will never be able to run away from me and
19 those bitches workin at the red roof inn hotel know who the fuck I am and that’s why
20 they didn’t do anything when yo stupid ass went up tryna get them to help you after I
21 fucked up your face and gave you that black eye, play with me if you want to bitch...” “I
22 will have you and your whole family done u hoe for me and get my money that’s it”

23 135. Defendant profited from the sex trafficking of Plaintiff and knowingly or negligently

1 aided, enabled, and facilitated the sex trafficking of Plaintiff. Defendant rented rooms to
2 Plaintiff's trafficker(s) when they knew, or should have known, that her trafficker(s) was using
3 their room to subject Plaintiff to repeat sexual exploitation and sexual servitude.

4 136. Defendant's failure, by its agents, servants, staff, and employees, to timely and properly
5 prevent the sex trafficking or timely intervene regarding the same was a proximate and competent
6 cause and substantial factor in causing Plaintiff's severe injuries in this case, including but not
7 limited to, being the victim of sex trafficking when at this subject hotel and suffering personal
8 injury and physical and mental trauma from being induced to engage in commercial sex with
9 multiple "Johns" per day, while simultaneously being under fear of severe harm or death if she
10 did not comply, as well as all residual injuries suffered by her, including her causally related
11 PTSD.

12 137. Upon information and belief, Plaintiff was advertised for sex on websites known for
13 trafficking, whereby Defendants provided open access to these known websites, permitting
14 traffickers and buyers to enable, facilitate, and otherwise assist in the harboring of Plaintiff for
15 the purpose of sex trafficking.

16 138. Plaintiff being sex trafficked at this subject hotel was a proximate cause, competent
17 cause and substantial factor in causing her severe and permanent injuries, including but not
18 limited to, personal injuries and significant levels of psychological trauma, due to the levels of
19 abuse she was caused to endure during the time she was trafficked. This trauma led to depression,
20 anxiety disorders, and PTSD, which in turn affects daily functioning.

21 139. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' multiple failures to act, mandate,

1 establish, execute anti-trafficking measures and/or modify their anti-trafficking efforts at their
2 hotel property, Plaintiff was sex trafficked, sexually exploited, and victimized repeatedly at
3 Defendant's hotel.

4 140. As a consequence of being sex trafficked at the subject hotel, Plaintiff suffered and will
5 continue to suffer substantial economic, physical, mental, emotional, psychiatric, and
6 psychological injuries as the result of being trafficked and sexually exploited at the subject hotel
7 in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1591.

8
9 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF**

10 10 **WHEREFORE**, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendant for more than
11 \$75,000, as identified in each of the above-referenced claim(s) and Count(s) and as follows:

12
13 a) All available compensatory damages for the described losses with respect to
14 each cause of action;

15 b) Past and future medical expenses, as well as the costs associated with past and
16 future life care;

17 c) Past and future lost wages and loss of earning capacity;

18 d) Past and future emotional distress;

19 e) Consequential and/or special damages;

20 f) All available noneconomic damages, including without limitation pain,
21 suffering, and loss of enjoyment of life;

22 g) Disgorgement of profits obtained through unjust enrichment;

23 h) Restitution;

- i) Reasonable and recoverable attorney's fees;
- j) Punitive damages with respect to each cause of action;
- k) Costs of this action; and
- l) Pre-judgement and all other interest recoverable.

THE PLAINTIFF DEMANDS A TRIAL BY JURY

Dated: May 15, 2023

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

s/ Susanna L. Southworth

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